

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 /085 W
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P 261720Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4497
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, EEC, BE
SUBJECT: BELGIAN VIEWS ON EC-NINE MIDDLE EAST STATEMENT

REF: A) COPENHAGEN 491, B) COPENHAGEN 492,
C) BRUSSELS 962, D) STATE 15963, E) COPENHAGEN 228

1. SUMMARY - BELGIANS DON'T THINK AN EC-9 JOINT
STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST WOULD BE "USEFUL" AT
THE MOMENT. FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET ISSUES UNILATERAL
BELGIAN STATEMENT URGING RESUMPTION OF PEACE INITIATIVE.
EGYPTIAN EMBASSY PUSHES HARD FOR AN EC-9 STATEMENT.

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2. BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY'S MIDDLE EAST DIRECTOR
(AMBASSADOR PATERNOTTE) TOLD US JANUARY 24 THAT BELGIUM
DOES NOT THINK THAT ANOTHER EC-9 JOINT DECLARATION
ON THE MIDDLE EAST WOULD BE "USEFUL" AT THIS MOMENT,
BUT HE STRESSED THAT THIS JUDGMENT COULD CHANGE
RAPIDLY DEPENDING ON FAST-MOVING DEVELOPMENTS. HE
SAID THE NINE'S NOVEMBER 22 STATEMENT SUPPORTING THE

MIDDLE EAST PEACE INITIATIVE FOLLOWING SADAT'S JERUSALEM TRIP WAS STILL VALID, AND EMPHASIZED THAT ANY NEW STATEMENT BY THE NINE WOULD HAVE TO BE "RED HOT" TO HAVE ANY SALUTARY EFFECT; REPETITIOUS, HORTATORY RHETORIC WOULD ACCOMPLISH NOTHING. HE TOLD US THIS WAS THE ESSENCE OF HIS REPLY TO A JANUARY 23 DEMARCHE BY EGYPTIAN DCM URGING BELGIAN SUPPORT FOR A NEW E.C.-NINE DECLARATION IN FAVOR OF THE PEACE PROCESS AND AGAINST ISRAELI OBSTRUCTIONISM.

3. PATERNOTTE SAID THAT BELGIUM EXPECTS NO RESPONSE TO FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET'S LETTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER DYAN (REF C) DELIVERED TO THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR IN BRUSSELS JANUARY 18, BEFORE THE BREAKDOWN OF TT MIDDLE EAST TALKS. HE SAID BELGIANS VIEW ISRAELIS AS TONE-WALLING" THE PEACE TALKS ON BOTH THE PALESTINE ISSUE AND THE QUESTION OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI, WHICH HE SAID WERE PURELY MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.

4. PATERNOTTE SAID THAT POSSIBILITIES FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE EC-9 ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST DURING THE DANISH PRESIDENCY ARE INHIBITED BY WHAT HE VIEWED AS DENMARK'S EXCESSIVE CAUTION IN DEALING WITH MIDDLE EAST ISSUES. HE WARNED THAT ANY U.S. INPUT ON MIDDLE EAST PEACE TO THE DANISH PRESIDENCY ALONG THE LINES OF "WATCH AND WAIT" WOULD ONLY REINFORCE

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THE EXISTING DANISH PREDILECTION TO TAKE NO JOINT ACTION. HE DID NOT SEE MUCH POSSIBILITY OF ANY RECOMMENDATIONS COMING OUT OF THIS WEEK'S EXPERTS' MEETING IN COPENHAGEN AND SAID DEVELOPMENTS WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT THE FEBRUARY 7-8 POLITICAL DIRECTOR'S MEETING OR THE 13-14 FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING.

5. IN THE ABSENCE OF JOINT EC-9 ACTION AND WITH THE BREAK-OFF IN MIDDLE EAST PEACE TALKS, PATERNOTTE SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET HAD APPROVED A BELGIAN PUBLIC STATEMENT, RELEASED BY THE MINISTRY'S SPOKESMAN JANUARY 20. STATEMENT REPEATS MUCH OF THE JOINT EC-9 LANGUAGE OF THE NOVEMBER STATEMENT AND EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT THE PROCESS TOWARDS PEACE INITIATED BY SADAT'S "COURAGEOUS INITIATIVE" WOULD BE ABLE TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES AND "LEAD RAPIDLY TO A JUST AND DURABLE SOLUTION IN THE REGION" (TEXT BELOW).

6. EGYPTIAN DCM (ZAKI) TOLD US EARLIER (JANUARY 23) THAT HE WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO SEEK BELGIAN SUPPORT FOR A "STRONG DECLARATION" BY EC-9 SUPPORTING

SADAT'S PEACE INITIATIVE, A DECLARATION THAT WOULD PUT PRESSURE ON THE ISRAELIS TO RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUES RATHER THAN STALLING AND RESORTING TO RHETORIC. HE SAID THE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY IN BRUSSELS WAS COORDINATING SIMILAR DEMARCHES IN OTHER EC CAPITALS. HE THOUGHT THAT THE PEACE TALKS, BEFORE THEY WERE BROKEN OFF, WERE MAKING SOME PROGRESS TOWARDS AN AGREEMENT ON PRINCIPLES FOR A MIDDLE EAST PEACE. HE SAID THE PALESTINE ISSUE WAS NOT A STUMBLING BLOC PER SE FOR

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THE EGYPTIANS BECAUSE EGYPT WANTED ONLY TO ARRIVE AT "A BROAD GENERAL PRINCIPLE" ON PALESTINE AND THEN LEAVE THE INTERESTED PARTIES THE TOUGH TASK OF HAMMERING OUT THE DETAILS. HE SAID THAT ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE ON THE SINAI SETTLEMENTS QUESTION WAS THE ONE ISSUE THAT HAD BROUGHT AN END TO THE TALKS.

7. FOLLOWING IS AN INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET'S JANUARY 20 MIDDLE EAST STATEMENT:

QUOTE

BELGIUM, AS WELL AS OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN
COMMUNITY, EXPRESSED THE HOPE LAST NOVEMBER 22
THAT THE DIALOGUE INITIATED BY THE COURAGEOUS
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INITIATIVE OF PRESIDENT SADAT WOULD LEAD TOWARDS A
JUST, DURABLE SETTLEMENT OF ALL ISSUES, TAKING
INTO ACCOUNT THE REQUIREMENTS AND PREOCCUPATIONS OF ALL
THE INTERESTED PARTIES.

BELGIUM INTENDS TO MAINTAIN THIS HOPE. AS SHE HAS
ALREADY STATED ALONG WITH HER PARTNERS OF THE
COMMUNITY, SHE BELIEVES MORE THAN EVER THAT IT IS
URGENT THAT TRUE PEACE BE ESTABLISHED FOR ALL THE
PEOPLES OF THE REGION, BASED ON PRINCIPLES RECOGNIZED
BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND WHICH ARE
CONTAINED SPECIFICALLY IN UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLU-
TIONS 242 AND 338, AND IN THE DECLARATION OF
THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE OF JUNE 29, 1977.

FOR THESE REASONS, THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD HOPE
THAT THE PROCESS TOWARDS PEACE, SO MAPPILY SET
IN MOTICN LAST NOVEMBER, WOULD BE ABLE TO OVERCOME
THE DIFFICULTIES INHERENT IN SUCH AN AMBITIOUS
UNDERTAKING AND LEAD RAPIDLY TO A JUST AND DURABLE
SETTLEMENT IN THE REGION.

END QUOTE. OLSEN

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